ATTACHMENT A

16. (Amended) An automated prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged pill dispensers, each operable to count out and dispense pills of a different pharmaceutical, computer control means [to store] ~~for storing~~ a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a different pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, [said computer control means] ~~and for~~ selecting the pill dispensers dispensing the pharmaceuticals specified in said stored prescriptions and controlling the selected pill dispensers to simultaneously count out <u>pills from said pill dispensers</u> and <u>sequentially</u> dispense ~~said counted~~ pills, said computer control means stopping each pill dispenser from counting out and dispensing pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out and dispensed, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer control means causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

19. (Amended) An automated prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged pill dispensers, each operable to count out and dispense pills of a different pharmaceutical, computer control means to store a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a different pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, each computer control means selecting the pill dispensers dispensing the pharmaceuticals specified in said stored prescriptions and controlling the selected pill dispensers to simultaneously count out <u>pills from said pill dispensers</u> and <u>sequentially</u> dispense pills, said computer control means stopping each pill

dispenser from counting out and dispensing pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out and dispensed, a plurality of output hoppers one for each of said pill dispensers to receive the pills counted out and dispensed by said pill dispensers, output snouts, one connected to each of said output hoppers, said computer control means including means to selectively permit the release of the pills from said output hoppers through the corresponding output snouts, said output snouts being arranged in at least one row and defining an aisle extending adjacent to and parallel to said row to permit an operator to have ease of access to pills dispensed through said snouts.

21. (Amended) A pharmaceutical pill dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers each operable to store a plurality of pills to be dispensed in a supply hopper and to [count and] simultaneously count out and sequentially dispense pills from the corresponding supply hopper, computer control means to select one of said dispensers and to operate the selected dispensers to count out and dispense a preselected number of pills, each computer control means maintaining a hopper quantity for each of said dispensers representing the number of pills in the hopper of such dispenser and reducing the hopper quantity of each dispenser by the preselected number counted out by such dispenser when the selected dispenser is caused to count out the preselected number of pills, said computer control means including means to provide an indication to an operator when the hopper quantity of one of said dispensers falls below a predetermined minimum, and means to increase the hopper quantity for each dispenser when pills are added to the supply hopper of such dispenser by the number of pills added to the supply hopper of a corresponding pill dispenser.

24. (Amended) A method of dispensing prescriptions [s] as recited in claim 23 further comprising printing a label for each of the prescriptions stored in said memory of said computer, said label containing the prescription information of the prescriptions stored in the memory of said computer, applying the printed labels to prescription vials and filling the labeled prescription vials with the pills counted out and dispensed by said selected dispensers.

28. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills corresponding to at least one of said plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

29. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer

controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills corresponding to the plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

30. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills, each of the plurality of pill dispensers dispensing a different one of said

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plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said

computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing

information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said

prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next

prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill

dispenser into a prescription container.

    31. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill

dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer

controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of

prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer

controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of

said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously

count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the

pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out,

said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially

dispense the pills responsive to a predetermined command or action by the operator, and label

means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label

means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored

prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will

not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding

prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

32. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling at least one of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills comprising one of said plurality of prescriptions at a time, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

33. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out,

said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially

dispense the pills comprising one of said plurality of prescriptions at a time, and label means to

produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to

produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions,

wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a

prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription

have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

34. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill

dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one of a data

processor and a computer responsively connected to said plurality of pill dispensers and

including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill

dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form

and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers

dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said

plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller

stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the

corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling said

plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills corresponding to at least one of said

plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said

computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing

information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said

prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next

prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

35.   An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one of a data processor and a computer responsively connected to said plurality of pill dispensers and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills corresponding to the plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

36.   An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one of a data processor and a computer responsively connected to said plurality of pill dispensers and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill

dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills, each of the plurality of pill dispensers dispensing a different one of said plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

37. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one of a data processor and a computer responsively connected to said plurality of pill dispensers and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling each of

said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills responsive to a predetermined

command or action by the operator, and label means to produce prescription container labels,

said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing

information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said

prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next

prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill

dispenser into a prescription container.

38. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill

dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one of a data

processor and a computer responsively connected to said plurality of pill dispensers and

including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill

dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form

and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers

dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said

plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller

stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the

corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling at least

one of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills comprising one of said

plurality of prescriptions at a time, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said

computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing

information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said

prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next

prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

39. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one of a data processor and a computer responsively connected to said plurality of pill dispensers and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills comprising one of said plurality of prescriptions at a time, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

40. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions

each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said controller selecting said

plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of

prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the

pills, said controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of

pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said controller

controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills corresponding to at

least one of said plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container

labels, said controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing

information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said

prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next

prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill

dispenser into a prescription container.

41. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill

dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one controller

responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions

each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said controller selecting said

plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of

prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the

pills, said controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of

pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said controller

controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills

corresponding to the plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container

labels, said controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing

information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

42. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills, each of the plurality of pill dispensers dispensing a different one of said plurality of prescriptions, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

43. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions

each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills responsive to a predetermined command or action by the operator, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

44. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said controller controlling at least one of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills comprising one of said plurality of prescriptions at a time, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said controller causing said label means to produce prescription

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labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

45. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said controller controlling each of said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills comprising one of said plurality of prescriptions at a time, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

46. The dispensing system of any of claims 28-45, wherein each of said pill dispensers signals the operator to assist in dispensing the pills when ready.

47.   The dispensing system of any of claims 28-45, further comprising a plurality of output hoppers one for each of said pill dispensers to receive the pills counted out by said pill dispensers, output snouts, one connected to each of said output hoppers, said controller controlling the selective release of the pills from said output hoppers through the corresponding output snouts, said output snouts being arranged in at least one row and defining an aisle extending adjacent to and parallel to said row to permit the operator to have ease of access to pills dispensed through said snouts.

48.   The dispensing system of any of claims 28-45, wherein said plurality of pill dispensers sequentially dispense the pills into a bottle corresponding to one of said plurality of prescriptions.

49.   The dispensing system of any of claims 28-45, wherein said plurality of pill dispensers sequentially dispense the pills into a bottle corresponding to at least one of said plurality of prescriptions.

50.   The dispensing system of any of claims 28-45, wherein said plurality of pill dispensers sequentially dispense the pills into at least one bottle corresponding to at least one of said plurality of prescriptions.

51.   The dispensing system of any of claims 28-45, wherein said controller indicates to the operator when a hopper quantity of at least one of said dispensers requires refilling responsive to predetermined criteria and increases the hopper quantity for the at least one dispenser when the pills are added to a supply hopper of the at least one dispenser by a number of pills.

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52. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, a plurality of output hoppers one for each of said pill dispensers to receive the pills counted out by said pill dispensers, output snouts, one connected to each of said output hoppers, said controller controlling the selective sequential release of the pills from said output hoppers through the corresponding output snouts, said output snouts being arranged in at least one row and defining an aisle extending adjacent to and parallel to said row to permit the operator to have ease of access to pills dispensed through said snouts, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

53. An operator assisted prescription dispensing system comprising a plurality of pill dispensers, each operable to count out pills of at least one pharmaceutical, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of pill dispensers and storing a plurality of prescriptions each specifying a pharmaceutical in pill form and a number of pills, said computer

controller selecting said plurality of pill dispensers dispensing the pills specified in at least one of said plurality of prescriptions and controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out the pills, said computer controller stopping each pill dispenser from counting out the pills when the number of pills specified in the corresponding prescription have been counted out, said computer controller controlling said plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills corresponding to at least one of said plurality of prescriptions to the operator, and label means to produce prescription container labels, said computer controller causing said label means to produce prescription labels containing information corresponding to said stored prescriptions, wherein said label means produces said prescription labels one at a time and will not produce a prescription label for the next prescription until after pills specified in a preceding prescription have been received from a pill dispenser into a prescription container.

54. A method of dispensing pills in a prescription dispensing system having a plurality of pill dispensers, comprising the steps of:

controlling the plurality of pill dispensers to simultaneously count out pills responsive to a corresponding plurality of prescriptions;

controlling the plurality of pill dispensers to sequentially dispense the pills responsive to at least one of a predetermined command and an action by an operator;

receiving the pills counted out by each dispenser into a corresponding upper hopper;

releasing the pills from said upper hopper into a corresponding lower hopper;

positioning vials to receive pills from the lower hoppers which have received pills; and

releasing pills from the lower output hoppers into said vials.

55. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles and said computer controller controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles.

56. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to the plurality of dispensing descriptions.

57. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to at least one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions.

58. An operator assisted article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles responsive to a predetermined command or action by the operator.

59. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling at least one of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles comprising one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions at a time.

60. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said

plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles comprising one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions at a time.

61. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one of a data processor and a computer respectively connected to said plurality of dispensing subsystems and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles.

62. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one of a data processor and a computer respectively connected to said plurality of dispensing subsystems and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to the said plurality of dispensing descriptions.

63. An operator assisted article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one of a data processor and a computer respectively connected to said

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plurality of dispensing subsystems and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to at least one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions, each of the plurality of dispensing subsystems dispensing a different one of the articles to the operator.

64. An operator assisted article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one of a data processor and a computer respectively connected to said plurality of dispensing subsystems and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles responsive to a predetermined command or action by the operator.

65. An operator assisted article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one of a data processor and a computer respectively connected to said plurality of dispensing subsystems and including at least one computer controller responsively

controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling at least one of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions at a time.

66.   An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one of a data processor and a computer respectively connected to said plurality of dispensing subsystems and including at least one computer controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles comprising one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions at a time.

67.   An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said controller controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to

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sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to at least one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions.

68. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles corresponding to the plurality of dispensing descriptions.

69. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles, each of the plurality of dispensing subsystems dispensing a different one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions.

70. An operator assisted article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of

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articles, said controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said computer controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles responsive to a predetermined command or action by the operator.

71. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said controller controlling at least one of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles comprising one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions at a time.

72. An article dispensing system comprising a plurality of adjacently arranged article dispensing subsystems each including a supply hopper for a plurality of articles to be dispensed, at least one controller responsively controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems and storing a plurality of dispensing descriptions each specifying a number of articles, said computer controller selecting and controlling said plurality of dispensing subsystems to simultaneously count out the articles, and said controller controlling each of said plurality of dispensing subsystems to sequentially dispense the articles comprising one of said plurality of dispensing descriptions at a time.